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THE EVOLUTION OF

THE LANGUAGE ISSUE

IN QUEBEC, 1977-1983

October 17, 1983

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## PART I

### POETS, PRAYERS AND PROMISES

We risk breaking up Canada today because anglophones didn't respect us for the past 100 years. If we treat our minorities the way English Canadians treated us during the past 100 years, we'll have a time bomb breaking us up in 100 years. (1)

It was not exactly what G rald Godin's riding association wanted to hear. He went on, however, warning against "vengeful nationalism":

We can't reflect the same closed, narrow-minded attitude the English Canadians have shown us. If you want that, I don't want it, I don't think anybody here does. (1)

Instead of applause, Godin received a barrage of criticism. As one lady put it:

You never mentioned any of these attitudes you have to us before we nominated you. It's thanks to us you were elected, and if you want to be re-elected, you'll have to listen to us. We want to help francophones without consideration for anglophones. They can take care of themselves. (1)

Rookie MNA Godin was caught in the passions being stirred once again in Quebec, thanks to the Parti Qu b cois government's re-opening of the language issue just two weeks earlier. On April 1, 1977, it had published a White Paper entitled, "Quebec's Policy on the French Language", that was to become Bill 1, and ultimately Bill 101, or the Charter of the French Language.

The Charter was the latest in a series of studies and laws concerning the

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1. Cl roux, Richard, "Defending Rights of English Brings Trouble for P.Q. Member", Globe and Mail, April 14, 1977, pp. 1,2.

relationship of the French and English languages in Canada. The Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism of the mid-60's had led to the Federal Official Languages Act of 1969. In the same year, the St. Léonard school controversy had produced Bill 63, and the setting up of Quebec's own inquiry into the status of the French language in this province, the Gendron Commission. Its report was the basis for the Bourassa régime's Bill 22, which came into effect on July 31, 1974.

The father of the 1977 White Paper, Camille Laurin, argued that Bill 22 was not strong enough to ensure that it would become "normal" for French-speaking Quebecers to be able to function in French anywhere in Quebec. Initially, neither Premier René Lévesque nor backbencher Gérald Godin felt that all parts of the White Paper's legislative proposals were necessary to meet this end.

Only days after the Paper's release, Godin told students at Dawson College that the Charter need not force English-speaking people from other provinces to enrol their children in French schools, "s'il s'agit d'un nombre restreint de citoyens anglophones."<sup>2</sup>

Godin went on to invite the minority and its media to demand the changes in the White Paper that would satisfy it. Asked about the Mercier MNA's independent stand on the draft language policy, government officials noted that Mr. Godin had always been more preoccupied with the P.Q.'s social mission than with its independence option.<sup>2</sup>

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2. O'Neill, Pierre, "Godin le juge trop radical", Le Devoir, 1e 6 avril, 1977, p. 8.

In any case, Lévesque himself had already reminded 350 party members from 14 Montreal ridings that the party had been elected on "a policy aimed at reflecting the rights of the majority and its affirmation and...respecting the recognized rights of the English-speaking minority".<sup>3</sup>

And like Godin, Lévesque wondered aloud why English-speaking people from all parts of Canada could not have access to Quebec's English schools.

After all, Canadians cannot really be considered immigrants, there are no checkpoints at the border when they come into Quebec and at the moment we are still part of Canada..." Lévesque said that immigration to Quebec from other Canadian provinces has not been so great in recent years to arouse fears of inundation . (4)

While the Premier and the member from Mercier were struggling to reconcile the aspirations of the linguistic majority with the needs of the minority, the pilot of Quebec's new language legislation had no such difficulty.

The situation of the French language in Quebec is urgent, he said in introducing the White Paper:

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3. "English Quebecers Defended by Lévesque", Winnipeg Free Press, March 26, 1977, p. 4
  4. Philips, Andrew, "French Lack Won't Cost Jobs: Laurin", Gazette, April 18, 1977, p p. 1, 2.

Celle-ci s'explique à son avis par la dénatalité, l'intégration des immigrants à la majorité anglophone, la domination de l'anglais comme langue de l'économie, et par la politique aggressive du gouvernement fédéral à l'endroit du Québec...

"Il y avait un redressement à effectuer, un rattrapage à faire pour la collectivité francophone, il y avait des blessures à réparer, il y avait des maladies dont nous devons nous guérir même si l'organisme était resté sain." (5)

The White Paper, most of which Laurin drafted himself, was a document which, some critics charged, was highly selective in its use of quotations and figures to document its case.<sup>6,7</sup>

However, Laurin stuck to his version of the facts. As the White Paper was being transformed into draft legislation for presentation to the National Assembly on April 27, 1977, Premier Lévesque claimed that there had been major changes to take into account the reactions provoked by the White Paper over the previous four weeks.<sup>8</sup> Interviewed on the day that the French Language Charter was launched, however, Laurin agreed with the press that, with few exceptions, none of the changes suggested to him since the beginning of April had been incorporated in Bill 1.<sup>9</sup>

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5. Descôteaux, Bernard, "Il n'est plus question d'un 'Québec bilingue '", Le Devoir, 1e 2 avril, 1977, p. 8.
  6. Ryan, Claude, "Le Livre blanc sur la langue", Le Devoir, 1e 2 avril, 1977, p. 5.
  7. Johnson, William, "Quebec White Paper on Language Inflammatory, Based on Misleading Use of Quotations from Report", Globe and Mail, April 6, 1977, p. 8.
  8. Descôteaux, Bernard, "Des changements substantiels (Lévesque) ou non (Laurin)", Le Devoir, 1e 22 avril, 1977, p. 6.
  9. Roy, Michel, "Le projet de loi no. 1: un texte impératif, vigoureux, contraignant", Le Devoir, 1e 22 avril, 1977, p. 6.

He noted that these initial suggestions had been based on a summary of draft legislation. Now that everyone had a detailed legislative proposal in front of them, they would be able to react with greater care and attention, and he did not rule out the possibility that their recommendations might lead to amendments to the bill at the close of parliamentary hearings on them.<sup>9a</sup> In the end, however, there were no major changes. Doctor Laurin kept on a steady course towards the goal so clearly laid out in the White Paper: the creation of a unilingual, French-speaking Quebec.

Only once during the course of the debate did he lose the even temper he was to become so famous for. When 326 prominent French-speaking Quebecers wrote an open letter to Dr. Laurin, criticizing various aspects of the law and questioning whether it was even necessary,<sup>10</sup> Laurin was reported to have said:

I'm not surprised (by this criticism). This political establishment is enfiéffed (has sold out) to the English establishment and has always imposed through electoral fund-raising their liberalism, immobilism and the status quo from which they profit. (11)

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9a. Roy, Michel, "Le projet de loi no. 1: un texte impératif, vigoureux, contraignant", Le Devoir, le 22 avril, 1977, p. 6.

10. "Le projet de loi no. 1, tel que conçu nuira au développement économique et donnera libre cours à l'intolérance tant à l'intérieur qu'à l'extérieur du Québec", Le Devoir, le 4 juin, 1977, p. 5.

11. Daignault, Richard Jr., "Liberal Asks Laurin to Apologize", Montreal Star, June 8, 1977, p. 1.

A couple of days later, at the opening of the parliamentary hearings on the Charter, Laurin declared that the "vast debate" on the language issue had led to a consensus which would have been unthinkable just a few years earlier.<sup>12</sup> He argued that even the 326 francophone community leaders were part of a consensus in favour of the goals he was striving for through Bill 1:

Ainsi, en fin de semaine, 300 citoyens venant d'horizons politiques que nos amis d'en face connaissent bien, publiaient une longue déclaration dans laquelle ils s'élevaient contre certains aspects du projet. Ils n'ont pu s'empêcher d'admettre, cependant, que désormais, au Québec, le français doit devenir la langue normale et habituelle du travail, de l'enseignement et des communications.

Ils affirmaient également que l'énoncé des droits linguistiques fondamentaux, tels que formulés dans le projet, ne sauraient faire l'objet d'un débat. Ils exprimaient leur accord quant au droit des travailleurs de recevoir les communications de leur employeur en français. Ils se ralliaient à la flexibilité, c'est leur propre expression du projet de Charte, notamment, en ce qui concerne les articles 58 et 113 qui assurent la mobilité des cadres dont les entreprises ont besoin et l'utilisation de l'anglais pour les échanges des entreprises du Québec avec celles des autres provinces et des autres pays.

Je pense que cette déclaration est assez représentative d'un ensemble de prises de positions qui ont généralement été considérées comme défavorables au projet de loi. Si l'on se place dans le contexte de l'évolution historique du Québec, il y a là un acquis nouveau et fondamental.

Que des citoyens venant de milieux aussi conservateurs et généralement réfractaires au changement soient maintenant d'accord avec les principes que je viens d'énoncer, cela constitue le signe d'une évolution majeure dans l'histoire du Québec. Il y a à peine quelques années, voir même quelques mois, un tel accord eût été impensable. (12)

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12. Journal des Débats, Commission permanente de l'éducation, des affaires culturelles et des communications, le 7 juin, 1977, p. CLF - 54.

From June 7 to July 8, 1977 some 60 briefs were presented and discussed in parliamentary commission. Several dozen more were read by the members of the commission. The many modifications which were suggested produced few amendments, and on August 26, 1977 the Charter of the French Language became law. Premier Lévesque, defending a law which he had earlier argued was humiliating but necessary,<sup>13</sup> asked all Quebecers, even those opposed to the Charter, to give it "un essai loyal" for one or two years.<sup>14</sup> In return, he pledged that the government would apply it with flexibility and an open mind, so long as the essentials were maintained.<sup>14</sup>

It did not take long for the Charter to make itself felt. In July, Premier Lévesque had labelled various media stories about an English-speaking exodus from Quebec, "unadulterated crap"<sup>15</sup>; but in October, Dr. Laurin admitted that anglophone Quebecers were leaving in significant numbers, and hinted that as many as 50,000 people might leave before the referendum. He also touched on the problem of those students who were enrolled in English schools in defiance of Bill 22 and/or Bill 101. Although most estimates placed the total number of these so-called "illegal children" at about 2,000, the Minister claimed it was 6,000<sup>16</sup> — a figure he denied ever using a few days later.

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13. "Lévesque: le projet de loi no. 1 est une étape humiliante mais nécessaire", Le Devoir, le 29 avril, 1977, p. 1.

14. LeBlanc, Gérard, "Lévesque: soumettons la loi à un essai loyal d'un an ou deux", Le Devoir, le 27 août, 1977, p. 1.

15. "Stories on Exodus from Quebec Media Fabrication: Lévesque", Globe and Mail, July 4, 1977, p. 1.

16. Clérout, Richard, "Laurin Surprised Businessmen Trust Courts over P.Q.", Globe and Mail, October 1, 1977, p. 10.

The P.Q. was now wrestling with a complex problem which its Liberal predecessors had been unable to resolve. A simple solution was proposed to Premier Lévesque during a meeting with members of the English-speaking community at Lester B. Pearson School in St. Hubert on October 3.<sup>17</sup>

Max Polak, then a Commissioner of the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal, asked if the Quebec government was prepared to regularize the situation of children "illegally attending classes before the passage of Bill 22". He cited the precedent of the Lévesque administration dropping all criminal charges against the teachers who had defied the Bourassa régime's back-to-work legislation in 1976, a move made, he recalled, for "social order and to avoid unrest." The Premier asked Mr. Polak to put his proposal in writing, which was done. Two different "amnesty" proposals later, there still are, in the fall of 1983, hundreds of children illegally learning in English schools.

That same evening in St. Hubert, the Premier was confronted with some of the anomalies of the rules restricting access to English schools. Why was access based on the parent's attendance only at the elementary level, and why did it have to be for a full six years if the person did all his Canadian schooling, including university, in English? Lévesque was visibly taken aback: "Well, let's check on that, because we shouldn't be mathematical to the point where it becomes silly...You know, we're trying this new legislation and, along the way, if it can honestly be adjusted towards more fairness while keeping the basic intentions intact, there's no reason why we can't discuss it."

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17. The following account is based on a tape recording of the meeting.

However, the Bureau d'admissibilité à l'école anglaise, (BAEA) to which all applications for entry to English schools must be presented, to this day insists on a full six years. In its last five annual reports, the Commission which hears appeals from BAEA decisions, has recommended that the Minister of Education order the Bureau to adopt the Commission's approach: a child is eligible for English schooling so long as one of his parents did all of his Quebec schooling in English, even if that did not include all of his elementary education. No such order has ever gone out.

To return to the meeting at Lester B. Pearson Elementary in October 1977, a parent asked the Premier why her daughter's Secondary V certificate was in French only.

Lévesque: Did she get her teaching in English?

Parent: Macdonald - Cartier is an English high school. Why are they sending a graduation certificate in French?

Lévesque: Search me...I don't know.

Parent: Search you? Well, you're the head of our government, you should know.

Lévesque (somewhat exasperatedly): I honestly don't know. I mean, you didn't even get a translation of the bloody thing?

Parent: They told me to see Mr. Lévesque. You're my Member of Parliament.

Lévesque: Look, I'm going to check...It might be a new regulation. I don't know. I don't see the sense of it.

In 1983, Secondary V certificates for graduates of English Quebec high schools are still in French only. Indeed, the Premier never did reply

to the school committee which had sponsored the meeting with answers to the many questions of which he had taken note that night.

While the P.Q. government was refusing funds to school boards for students "illegally" enrolled in their English schools, a little English girl in Aylmer was being denied access to the local French school despite her right, under article 6 of Bill 101, to receive instruction in French. An official of the local school board was quoted as saying that accepting Shannon Somers would result in "cultural pollution" because she did not know enough French for kindergarten. It took the intervention of the Minister of Education, Jacques-Yvan Morin, to get Shannon into the school.<sup>18</sup>

Speaking to McGill University students the following January, Premier Lévesque invited English Quebecers "to accept enough integration to understand and participate in society around you".<sup>19</sup> He added, "The English community is one of our main eyes, and a very important one, on the world. We want that channel and we have to share Quebec."<sup>19</sup>

In May, the Premier announced that the application of article 61 of the Charter was being relaxed so as not to prevent the promotion in English of books, magazines and other publications. He made it clear that the law itself would not be amended, however.<sup>20</sup>

Indeed, the father of Bill 101, Camille Laurin, had further government intervention in mind. During an interview for the pro-independence magazine, Ici Québec, he explained to interviewer Marcel Chaput why Bill 101 did not have a clause requiring anglophones to respect the right of francophones to be

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18. Montreal Star, September 14, 15, 20; November 18; December 6, 1977.

19. Trudeau, Dennis, "Quebec Anglos Vital Link on Continent, says Lévesque", Montreal Star, January 24, 1978, p. 1.

20. Daignault, Richard Jr., "P.Q. 'Relaxing' English Ad Ban", Montreal Star, May 24, 1978, p. 1.

served or informed in French:

Je pense que si nous avions été plus sévères, plus complets, il y aurait une certaine portion de l'électorat francophone qui ne nous aurait pas suivis.

Parce qu'elle n'en est pas rendue à ce degré d'évolution de décolonisation qui leur aurait permis de comprendre la profondeur de notre message...ce fut une question de dosage .

La loi 101, a encore déclaré le ministre, a débilinguisé la société québécoise le plus que nous avons pu...il est bien possible qu'au cours de la prochaine année les pages jaunes du téléphone soient uniquement en français.(21)

Comparing the English minority to a "fox in a henhouse", the Minister claimed that 80% of the Quebec economy was controlled by non-francophones, especially in the cultural area:

Le gouvernement provincial, dit-il, est le seul capitaliste disponible à la majorité francophone, et il interviendra dans le domaine culturel "en grossissant ce qui est français et même en diminuant ce qui est anglais.

Nous allons procéder de deux façons: en aidant ce qui est français dans le domaine culturel et en réglementant ce qui ne l'est pas, en établissant des normes qui changeront les critères de possession et de propriété des instruments de diffusion.

Et les mesures que nous proposons dans la politique de développement culturel ont pour but d'intervenir à l'intérieur de notre juridiction sur tous les points où il est possible et nécessaire d'intervenir. (21)

It was with understandable apprehension, then, that the English-speaking community awaited publication of Dr. Laurin's White Paper on

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21. " 'Grossir' le français; 'diminuer' l'anglais", Le Devoir, le 7 mars, 1978, p. 1, 6.

Cultural Development. When finally launched on June 6, 1978 it turned out to be a rather wordy psychoanalysis of Quebec society, much of it a repeat of the White Paper on Language. English Quebec is depicted as a generally well-off society with a full range of institutions, looking to the rest of North America and oblivious to French Quebec. Even though the English Community was described separately from the ethnic communities, it was to be treated simply as one among many ethnic groups. The White Paper promised support only for French Quebec culture and, when reporters asked the Minister about grants for other cultures, he said that the government was "open to all projects"<sup>22</sup> In English too? The Minister said he was ready to collaborate with "all ethnic groups".<sup>23</sup>

In order to have a better idea of how to integrate all of these groups into French Quebec society, the government organized a series of symposia or "mini-summits for the minorities" around the province from April through November of 1979. Although the various English communities were once again denied their status as a linguistic community,<sup>24</sup> in the Gaspé and the Eastern Townships they managed to wrest organizational control of the symposium from Dr. Laurin's officials and turn it into a genuine consultation. In the Townships, the Mini-Summit became the occasion for the region's English-speaking people to start organizing themselves as the Townshippers' Association, now the regional presence of Alliance Quebec in that area.

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22. La politique québécoise du développement culturel, Editeur Officiel du Québec, 1978.

23. Gagnon, Lysiane, "Pas de statut particulier pour la minorité anglaise", La Presse, le 7 juin, 1978, p. 82.

24. Quebec Government Departments and the Minorities, Editeur officiel du Québec, 1979.

Speaking to students at Champlain College in St. Lambert in March of that year, Premier Lévesque agreed with a young anglophone that there was just no chance of the French language disappearing from North America. He explained that "there was this fear in the 1960's tied to the declining birthrate and the fact that most minority-group immigrants assimilated to the English side. So there was this reaction coming from deep down in our French society...It was just inevitable."<sup>25</sup>

The following spring, as the referendum debate warmed up, it was to the English community's fears that the Premier spoke. He said that non-francophone Quebecers were as much a part of Quebec as the French-speaking majority, and that no matter how the referendum turned out, their rights and institutions would be respected.<sup>26</sup>

In October 1980, Lévesque stood by this position at a meeting of the P.Q. National Council. When the Council defeated a resolution to "recognize the right of the English minority to its social and cultural institutions regardless of Quebec's constitutional future,"<sup>27</sup> he told the delegates he thought the vote was an error. He later suggested that it might have been a reaction to the defeat of the Party's referendum the previous spring.<sup>27</sup>

Whatever the reason, it struck Jean-Pierre Proulx as "un raté spectaculaire".<sup>28</sup>

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25. Phillips, Andrew, "Lévesque Shakes His Head at Anglo Students' Attitude", Gazette, March 27, 1979, pp. 1, 4.

26. Cowan, Peter, "Lévesque Moves to Allay Anglos' Fears", Gazette, March 24, 1980, p. 10.

27. Auger, Michel C., "P.Q. Defeats Motion to Recognize Anglo Rights", Gazette, October 6, 1980.

28. Proulx, Jean-Pierre, "Un raté spectaculaire," Le Devoir, 1e 7 octobre, 1980.

In March 1981, the government launched its "Plan d'action" for integrating the minorities into the mainstream of Quebec life. The Plan, titled "Autant de façons d'être québécois", generally treated the English as just another cultural community. The office of the Minister responsible, Jacques-Yvan Morin, did take the trouble to send out a press release which declared that the real difficulties faced by Quebec's anglophones could be resolved without forcing Quebec to deny its character as a French society. It might be possible, for example, to have English oral and written examinations for entry into the Civil Administration. Information on one's rights and obligations, as well as the programmes and services offered by the Quebec government, could be provided in the principal languages of Quebec, including English. The release also asked:

Comment un groupe de 900,000 anglophones, fortement concentrés dans les milieux urbains, surtout Montréal, et entourés d'un vaste monde anglophone qui les nourrit et les soutient, pourrait-il disparaître avec autant de facilité? (29)

The Premier himself provided part of the answer as he launched his election campaign live on province-wide French television ten days later. Throughout his statement, he dropped references to "les autres". The Liberals were acting for "les autres", he claimed; the P.Q. was governing on behalf of the French-speaking majority.<sup>30</sup>

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29. "Les anglophones du Québec devraient 'entrevoir l'avenir avec confiance' ", communiqué de presse du Cabinet du Ministre d'Etat au développement culturel et scientifique, le 3 mars, 1981.

30. Fraser, Graham, "Lévesque Is Taking a Strong Anti-Anglophone Line, " Gazette, March 17, 1981, p. 4,

Once his party, including two anglophone MNA's, had won re-election, the Premier magnanimously placed an advertisement in the Gazette, inviting English-speaking Quebecers to get involved in the Parti Québécois' drive "to create a truly just, democratic, economically strong and culturally secure society for all of us and our children."<sup>31</sup>

Such security for francophones and non-francophones alike could only come from a consensus by the two groups on major elements of the language issue. The surprising results of a SORECOM poll, which had surveyed French and English-speaking people in the greater Montreal area in February 1982, was published on September 19, 1982.<sup>32</sup> It showed that a majority of francophones were in favour of bilingual signs, access by all English Canadians to English schools in Quebec, and even to equal status for English and French throughout the province, including services in both languages on demand from all levels of government in the province. Camille Laurin countered that an opinion poll was a one-time thing, not to be taken as the definite expression of an immutable position. "The last provincial election, he said, had alerted Quebecers to the continued danger of predatory anglophone influences."<sup>33</sup>

Six months later, Gérald Godin, by now Minister of Immigration and Cultural Communities, put it another way: asked if the mass of francophones saw the same threat to linguistic and cultural survival as the intellectuals did, Mr. Godin replied:

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31. Gazette, June 8, 1981.

32. Morissette, Rodolphe, "La Majorité veut une loi 101 assouplie", Le Devoir, le 19 septembre, 1981, pp. 1,2,20.

33. Chambers, Gretta, "Bill 101 Undermined", Gazette, September 26, 1981.

Ce n'est pas leur boulot.

Ce n'est pas le boulot de ceux qui travaillent à la Dominion Textile de réfléchir sur le sort de de Québécois. Cela est l'affaire des politiciens, du ministre des Affaires culturelles, du ministre de l'Education...

Le politicien joue le rôle du père dans la société, et le père doit penser à l'avenir. Quant on examine les statistiques pour les 10 ou 20 prochaines années, on en vient à la conclusion qu'il faut faire quelque chose.

M. Godin se dit convaincu que parce que la loi linguistique a contribué à redonner confiance aux Québécois francophones, "elle doit rester, ne pas disparaître".

Je pense que ce que les anglophones du Québec devraient accepter, c'est qu'en choisissant de vivre au Québec ils ont choisi de vivre à l'intérieur d'un territoire qui doit présenter un visage français. Et je pense que la plupart des Québécois francophones l'acceptent. (34)

In the fall of 1981, the "father" of the Charter of the French Language promised changes in the requirement that most commercial signs be solely in French "in the near future".<sup>35</sup> In February 1982, Dr. Laurin amended his promise to read "eventually".<sup>35</sup>

In October 1981, the P.Q. National Council had again rejected a resolution guaranteeing to the English minority the maintenance of its cultural, educational and health care institutions. Angered by this and other defeats, party president René Lévesque ordered an internal party referendum. About 50% of the membership responded, and a majority of them supported the minority-rights clause. At a party convention in mid-February 1982, the resolution was fleshed out to guarantee to the English community the maintenance of its essential institutions - educational and other. The party resolved that

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34. Lord, David, "Une fièvre entretenue par une minorité", Le Soleil, 1e 26 avril, 1982 p. A.5.

35. Gazette, October 24, 1981 and February 6, 1982.

the number and quality of the services should correspond proportionately to the needs of this community. These institutions would have to function in French as well as in English, without changing their original cultural character.<sup>36</sup> The party convention also called on the government to:

- faciliter, particulièrement aux personnes âgées ou démunies, l'adaptation à la période de transition entre le Québec autrefois bilingue et le Québec français, en leur offrant des documents et les services de Communication-Québec dans leur langue:
- aider par divers moyens (meilleur enseignement, implication des employeurs) les anglophones à apprendre le français. (36)

In an open letter in the Gazette to members of the English community a month later, Premier Lévesque said, "All I am asking for is an attitude of reasonableness".<sup>37</sup> Yet at the end of May, there were few government representatives at the founding convention of Alliance Quebec—the English community's first attempt to organize itself across the province on a grassroots basis.

Lévesque did meet the Alliance's leaders early in July, and they presented him with an urgent list of six major changes in government policy that would go a long way to making English-speaking Quebecers feel at home once more. They called for bilingual signs, abolition of the French tests for professionals, greater representation in the civil service and/or government boards, control and management by the English community of

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36. Falardeau, Louis, "Les droits de la minorité anglophone sont mieux garantis", La Presse, le 15 février, 1982.

37. Gazette, March 20, 1982.

its institutions, access to English schools for all English-speaking people, maintenance of the identity of English hospitals, social service centres and school boards. The Premier promised to reply in writing in September.

Instead, in September, Gérald Godin was given responsibility for all aspects of Bill 101, except access to schools. Presumably, he had read Benoit Aubin's piece on "Bill 101 - 5 years later", in the August issue of l'Actualité. In analyzing the impact of the law, particularly on Montreal, Aubin saw the city as facing two possible futures: one as a French city, but open and welcoming, importing brains and exporting profitable ideas; the other, a French city, but xenophobic, niggling, bureaucratized, cut off from the mainstream of ideas and methods, always a step behind the world to give itself time to translate everything that is invented elsewhere.<sup>38</sup>

From the start, Mr. Godin had trouble deciding which way to go with his new dossier. The day after assuming it, he promised a reassessment of the law - "the sooner the better" - which would lead to "fine-tuning" some of its parts, perhaps before Christmas.<sup>39</sup> A week later, he announced that the Quebec government would "probably relax Bill 101 regulations within three months to allow small businesses to erect bilingual outdoor public signs".<sup>40</sup>

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38. Aubin, Benoit, "La loi 101, cinq ans après", L'Actualité, août 1982.

39. Harris, Lewis, "Godin Pledges to Lend English an Ear", Gazette, September 10, 1982, p. B1.

40. Wilson-Smith, Anthony, "Bill 101 May Be Eased for Small Business", Gazette, September 18, 1982, p. 1.

In between these two pronouncements, however, Godin reacted strongly to the various school boards' decision to accept "Canada Clause" children while their cases had been appealed by the Quebec government. Speaking to Pierre Pascau on CKAC, he declared:

Je pense que ça peut créer un climat au Québec, chez les anglophones, négatif pour la solution du problème linguistique que vivent, disent-ils, les anglais. Et donc, moi je leur dis carrément, je leur ai dit personnellement, "si vous voulez vraiment faire de la merde, continuez à agir comme vous le faites et vous ne gagnerez rien. Au contraire vous allez perdre ce que vous voulez obtenir." (41)

A few days later, in an interview in the Gazette<sup>42</sup>, Godin stated that there could never again be complete bilingualism in public signs. He said that he had been naive to support the "Canada Clause" in 1977, although he still felt that admitting English Canadians to English Quebec schools wouldn't constitute any danger to French. However, such access would only come through reciprocal agreements with other provinces, as originally offered by Premier Lévesque in 1977.

At the end of October 1982, the P.Q. National Council unanimously urged the government not to make any fundamental changes to the language legislation. Premier Lévesque agreed,<sup>43</sup> and five days later, he sent his long-awaited written reply to Alliance Quebec. All six points raised by the Alliance were rejected, and the Premier could not refrain from seeing in some of them "a nostalgia for past privileges". Lysiane Gagnon of La Presse was not surprised by the Premier's reaction. The tone of his letter indicated to her that he did not understand that...

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41. Transcript of dialogue between Pierre Pascau and Gérald Godin on CKAC, mid-September, 1982.

42. Wilson-Smith, Anthony, "Godin's New Job: Put Up or Shut up on Bill 101", Gazette, September 18, 1982, p. B5.

43. Fraser, Graham, "P.Q. Policy Body against Easing Language Law", Gazette, November 1, 1982, pp. 1,2.

les dirigeants actuels d'Alliance-Québec, que M. Lévesque traite comme s'ils étaient des nostalgiques perpétuant la mentalité des anciens Establishments représentent au contraire une toute génération avec une sensibilité bien différente, celle de jeunes Montréalais de très vieille souche, ouverts à une bonne partie des changements provoqués par les lois 22 et 101 qui sont assez attachés au Québec pour avoir décidé d'y rester même si plusieurs auraient pu faire carrière ailleurs, et qui sont tous en outre parfaitement bilingues.

Autres faits: la fondation d'Alliance-Québec s'est faite dans un climat parfaitement démocratique, ou aucun francophone ne se serait senti mal à l'aise - à moins évidemment d'être paranoïaque et de vouloir interdire aux anglophones de parler anglais entre eux quand ils se réunissent (ce qui serait bien le comble du totalitarisme) et où flottait, plutôt que de l'agressivité, un désir d'aménagement, de compromis mutuels et de bonne entente. Où flottait aussi - autre réalité que le gouvernement refuse de percevoir - des griefs légitimes et un ressentiment explicable ...et qui se résorbera seulement si la majorité a assez de capacité d'empathie pour comprendre que la transition est difficile pour beaucoup d'anglophones. Mais ce sont les candidats de l'aile modérée qui ont été élus, les délégués rejetant sans équivoque la tendance - Freedom of Choice - de même que les résolutions qui auraient risqué de jeter de l'huile sur le feu. (44)

Early in March 1983, Godin promised substantial changes in Bill 101 to demonstrate Quebec's capacity to become a truly civilized country.<sup>45</sup> English institutions would be allowed to use English in their communications,<sup>46</sup> he said. On March 11, he declared that a parliamentary committee might be set up in the fall to correct "errors and excesses" in Bill 101.<sup>47</sup>

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44. Gagnon, Lysiane, "Pourquoi se scandaliser?", La Presse, le 18 novembre, 1982, p. A7.

45. Bouchard, Jacques, "Godin défend Trudeau et le 'French Power', fédéral", La Presse, le 8 mars, 1983, p. A 4.

46. Neal, Christopher, "Law Reform to 'Make Anglos Feel at Home'", Gazette, March 4, 1983, p. A 3.

47. Curran, Peggy, "Bill 101's 'Errors, Excesses' Will Be Corrected: Godin", Gazette, March 11, 1983, p. A 1.

Open to change he might be, but the Minister clearly did not appreciate any suggestions that Bill 101 might be responsible for the exodus of head offices and 140,000 Quebecers, including 106,000 English-speaking ones.

Ceux qui ne sont pas capables de nous sentir comme Québécois, ils n'ont qu'à partir. On ne changera pas d'odeur. (48)

Yet when a CROP poll a few weeks later showed that 20% of the remaining anglophones were planning to move in the next five years, Godin said it was "a shame":

We have to try the impossible so that those who were educated in Quebec, who have roots in Quebec - who are, as a result an asset to Quebec - stay in Quebec. (49)

On June 5, when Alliance Quebec made public a second study (Dean Ouellette of the University of Montreal Law School had done the first a year earlier) which questioned the legality of some of Bill 101's regulations, Godin said he had a third one also critical of the rules. The government, however, wasn't going to change anything: let someone take them to court. Jean-Claude Leclerc of Le Devoir disagreed:

Le gouvernement devrait corriger de lui-même les règlements, sans attendre que des citoyens, désormais mieux informés des 'lacunes' les fassent casser par les tribunaux! Le Québec n'a aucun intérêt à faire passer encore une fois sa législation pour la plus mal foutue, voire la plus "dangereuse" du pays, et ses juristes, pour des avocats de troisième qualité! (50)

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- 48. "Ils n'ont qu'à partir. On ne changera pas d'odeur", Le Devoir, le 21 avril, 1983 p. 3.
  - 49. Johnson, David, "'Shame', says Godin on Predicted Exodus of English Quebecers", Gazette, May 5, 1983, p. A 2.
  - 50. Leclerc, Jean-Claude, "Des règlements honteux", Le Devoir, le 7 juin, 1983, p. 10.

On June 9, Godin promised changes to restrictions on the use of English in Quebec, not because of the polls but due to reasonable requests from groups like the Montreal Board of Trade, the Municipal Action Group of Montreal and Alliance Quebec.<sup>51</sup> Four days later, Premier Lévesque said,

As far as the illegal - quote unquote-kids are concerned, among other things there was a very serious and concrete suggestion that was made by Mr. Ryan...and we're using that, plus our experience over five years, to study the question and find out if there isn't a way to alleviate some of those cases before the next school year. (52)

The school doors re-opened in September, with this thorny issue no closer to resolution. On October 1, 1983, the P.Q. National Council again rejected any modifications to Bill 101. Ten days later, Godin warned that there would be no big changes on Bill 101.<sup>53</sup> The next day, writing in La Presse, Godin painted the Canada Clause as a federal government ploy to weaken the French fact in Quebec.<sup>54</sup>

Is it any wonder that Lysiane Gagnon had been driven to write a few weeks earlier:

Pour aborder le problème de la langue et des minorités, il faut avoir du tact et un minimum de compassion, et être capable d'empathie. J'ai été de ceux qui ont applaudi lorsque le premier ministre a enlevé le dossier de la loi 101 au ministre Laurin pour le donner au ministre Godin, parce que je croyais que ce dernier serait plus pragmatique et plus humain. Je pense bien que j'avais tort. Ça n'aura pas été la première fois ni la dernière. M. Laurin, au moins ne se contredisait pas trois fois par semaine, comme M. Godin le fait depuis des mois à propos de la loi 101 (55)

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51. Mann, Jonathan, "Bill 101's Restrictions on English Will Be Eased, Minister Pledges", Gazette, June 9, 1983, p. A.5.

52. "Illegal Students May Get Legal Status: Lévesque", Gazette, June 13, 1983, p. A 1

53. "Don't Expect Big Changes to Bill 101: Godin", Gazette, October 11, 1983, p. A.6.

54. Godin, Gérald, "Ottawa et le français", La Presse, le 11 octobre, 1983, p. A 6.

55. Gagnon, Lysiane, "Les enfants de Louis Riel", La Presse, le 24 septembre, 1983.

PART IIEDUCATION: WHO'S THREATENING WHOM?

With his language law and cultural development policy solidly in place, Dr. Laurin turned his hand to the re-organization of the school system of Quebec. The first leak of his plan occurred in August, 1981, and once again the alarm bells rang in English Quebec. Now Minister of Education, Dr. Laurin seemed intent on breaking what was left of the school boards' countervailing power against the Department of Education, and centralizing even more power in the hands of that Ministry. This was perceived as a threat to all Quebecers of whatever language or religious faith; but it was particularly ominous for the English community because control of the principal institutions for the transmission of one's culture and language is fundamental to any minority community.

Dr. Laurin's grand design sprang leaks throughout the 1981-82 school year, helping to galvanize English-speaking Montrealers into organizing themselves at the grassroots, as many English communities had already done in other parts of the province. In June 1982, the official plan was finally published. It provided for language boards only on the Island of Montreal, and it confirmed fears that school boards were to be emasculated in the name of parental control at the level of the local school. English and French, Catholic and Protestant found consensus on a number of points of opposition to the Minister's new White Paper, forcing a partial restoration of universal suffrage and the extension of language boards, the extent of their powers still rather vague, across the province. Hearings on draft legislation are scheduled for November 1983.

(La communauté anglophone) sera ramenée à ses proportions réelles. Les Anglophones du Québec sont sans doute plus mobiles que les Francophones, mais il ne faut pas exagérer, beaucoup d'anglophones sont liés à leur emploi ici. On ne doit pas s'attendre à des départs massifs.

Mais, ce qui se passait, jusqu'ici, c'est que les Anglophones s'annexaient, par chance, la majorité des nouveaux arrivants. La fréquentation des écoles françaises diminuait, celle de l'école anglaise augmentait ou restait constante.

Nous leur disons maintenant "Vous allez garder tous vos droits, mais seulement vos droits. Vous allez être obligés de faire une cure d'amaigrissement et de prendre conscience de ce qu'il faut pour s'affirmer comme culture. (56)

Dr. Laurin therefore restricted access to English schools to children of those he considered to be English Quebecers; either present in the province on August 26, 1977, the day Bill 101 came into effect, or having gone to English Quebec elementary schools here.

During the parliamentary commission hearings on the Charter of the French Language, the Minister predicted that English school enrolment would drop from 220,756<sup>57</sup> to 194,500 by 1986-87. McGill University counter-predicted a drop to 177,000 without Bill 101, and 103,000 with it. (Both McGill forecasts assumed no English-speaking exodus.) Citing a Conseil de la langue française study at the end of 1979, Dr. Laurin was able to say that the law seemed to have attained its objective and that the English school population seemed to be stabilizing at around 15 per cent of the whole.<sup>58</sup>

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56. Dumas, Evelyn, "Gros Plan sur les objections à la Charte du français", Le Jour, le 6 mai 1977, p. 9.

57. Pottier, Dan, "Language Report Rapped", Montreal Star, February 18, 1978.

58. Picard, Jean-Claude, "La langue d'enseignement: l'objectif de la loi 101 a été atteint (Laurin)", Le Devoir, le 5 décembre 1979, pp. 1, 6.

He added that this process of stabilization confirmed what he had said at the time of the Bill 101 debates, that English schools would never disappear and that, on the contrary, it would continue to be fed by thousands of francophones and allophones:

Ces chiffres démontrent que ceux qui ont dramatisé cette question avaient tort puisque les statistiques indiquent que l'école anglaise, bien qu'en perte de vitesse, demeurera solidement implantée.(59)

The decline continued, however. By the 1979-80 school year, only 9.2% of the kindergarten population of the province was in English schools, although English-speaking Quebecers constituted 13% of the total population of Quebec.<sup>60</sup> By 1982-83, there were only 136,429 children in English public schools - 12.7%<sup>61</sup> of the public school total. More ominously, the kindergarten population of English schools, harbinger of the future of the whole English system, had fallen to 8%.<sup>62</sup> At the same time that English school enrolment has been in such sharp decline, there has been a tremendous increase in the voluntary enrolment in French schools of children eligible for English schooling under Bill 101. In 1977-78, the first school year under the Charter, there were 6,512 of them. By 1981-82 there were 11,764.<sup>62</sup>

Clearly, the French school system attracts far more voluntary "enrolees" than the combined totals of so called "illegals" and "Canada-Clause" children. For reasons known only

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59. Picard, Jean-Claude, "La langue d'enseignement; l'objectif de la loi a été atteint (Laurin)", Le Devoir, le 5 décembre 1979, pp.1,6.

60. Proulx, Jean-Pierre, "La communauté anglophone en déclin", Le Devoir, le 25 mars 1981, p.8.

61. Le Carre, René; Côté, Danielle, "La situation linguistique dans les établissements d'enseignement", Ministère de l'Éducation de Québec, juillet 1983, p. 11.

62. Proulx, Jean-Pierre, "La Charte du français n'a pas su attirer les Allophones dans les universités françaises", Le Devoir, le 28 septembre 1983, pp. 1,14.

to itself, however, the Quebec Government continues to focus its attention only on the latter two groups.

It is prepared to give teachers who break the law a total amnesty, but illegally enrolled students a mitigated one at best. Irony of ironies, one of the teacher union leaders who had received an amnesty from the Lévesque government, David Payne, suggested the establishment of a special program to help the "illegals" fit into the French school system. Their parents would be granted an amnesty in the sense that they would not be penalized for having enrolled their children in English schools previously.<sup>63</sup> His suggestions became the basis for a report by François Aquin, appointed by Dr. Laurin to find a solution to the problem. In publishing Aquin's report, in November 1981, the Minister threatened to take action against parents who refused to accept the Aquin plan and enrol their children in French schools.<sup>64</sup> In the summer of 1982, the Montreal Catholic School Commission offered free French courses to students wishing to transfer from its English to its French sector.<sup>65</sup> Three hundred of them made the move in the fall.<sup>66</sup> At the end of the year Laurin said he did not know whether he would grant an amnesty to the rest, or take legal proceedings.<sup>67</sup> At the end of May, 1983, Liberal Education critic, Claude Ryan, made concrete suggestions for resolving the "illegals" issue.<sup>68</sup> Both Dr. Laurin

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63. "One Way to Help the Kids", Gazette, editorial, September 16, 1981.

64. Malarek, Victor, "P.Q. to Rein in 'Illegals'", Globe and Mail, November 13, 1981.

65. "Illegal Students Offered Free Language Lessons", Gazette, May 26, 1982.

66. "Language Law Defiance Is Over for 300 'Illegals'", Gazette, January 28, 1982.

67. "Laurin Says He Hasn't Ruled Out Granting Amnesty", Gazette, December 18, 1982.

68. Ryan, Claude, "Les illégaux dans les écoles anglaises", Le Devoir, 1e 6 juin 1983.

and Premier Lévesque welcomed the plan, and said they hoped the problem could be cleared up before school opened in September. Sad to say, the "illegals" are still with us in the Fall of 1983.

During the debates on Bill 101, both Premier Lévesque and Gérald Godin stated publicly that allowing English-speaking people from other parts of Canada to enrol their children in English Quebec schools posed no threat to the French fact in Quebec. The Premier offered to open English schools to English-speaking people coming from any province that granted similar access to francophones from Quebec.<sup>69</sup> This offer of reciprocity was even written into Bill 101 (Article 86). Although no other provinces have ever taken up the offer, it still stands, so the Quebec government clearly accepts the possibility of implementing the Canada Clause (access for English-speaking people from other provinces), even if only piecemeal.

Meanwhile, in 1981, Dr. Laurin threatened to apply Article 23 of the Canadian Constitution to English schools here, the way it was affecting French schools elsewhere. Allowing English schools to exist only "where numbers warranted" would result in one third of them being closed, he said.<sup>70</sup>

In September 1982, commenting on the Deschênes judgment supporting the "Canada Clause", Laurin warned it could lead to social upheaval in Quebec. He said that what really worried the government was that French Quebecers could send their children briefly to English school outside the province and then bring them back to continue English education inside Quebec.<sup>71</sup>

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69. Block, Irwin, "Reciprocity: The Premiers Won't Buy It", Montreal Star, August 20, 1977, pp. A1, 2.

70. Fraser, Graham, "One in three English Schools Might Close Under Charter: Laurin", Gazette, November 13, 1981.

71. Senyk, Sandy, "Bill 101 Ruling Could Spark New 'Upheaval'", Gazette, September 14, 1982, pp. 1, 5.

Despite the dramatic shifts in English and French school enrolments, especially voluntary enrolments in francophone institutions, Dr. Laurin was still crying wolf. Not so Jacques Henripin, whose demographic projections in the mid-70's had provided much of the argument for the necessity of Bill 101. Now, in 1982, he was predicting that, with the Canada Clause, English school enrolment would decline to 8.7% of the total by the end of the century.<sup>72</sup> No matter; when the provincial government lost its appeal against the Deschênes judgment, Laurin said that losing at the Supreme Court level would pose "the most ominous threat that we ever had in Quebec in the field of education and language."<sup>73</sup>

In his judgment, Judge Deschênes had seen a much more fundamental menace in the arguments used by the Quebec government to support its restrictions to English schooling:

...Un droit collectif implique son établissement dans l'intérêt et pour le bénéfice de la collectivité, non de chacun de ses membres. La restriction à ce droit collectif peut fort bien entraîner la perte de ce droit par quelques membres de la collectivité mais, pour l'ensemble de celle-ci, le droit n'est pas nié: il est simplement restreint.

La Cour s'étonne, pour employer un euphémisme, d'entendre cet argument de la part d'un Gouvernement qui se flatte de maintenir en Amérique le flambeau de la civilisation française avec sa promotion des valeurs spirituelles et son respect traditionnel de la liberté.

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72. Gazette, editorials of September 10, November 15, 1982.

73. "Supreme Court Test of School Law 'Ominous Threat' in Ministers' View", Gazette, September 22, 1983, p. A3.

En effet l'argument du Québec fait état d'une conception totalitaire de la société à laquelle la Cour ne saurait se rallier. La personne humaine est la plus grande valeur que nous connaissions et rien ne doit concourir à diminuer le respect qui lui est dû. D'autres sociétés placent la collectivité au-dessus de l'individu. Elles emploient le rouleau-compresseur du Kolkhoze et ne voient de mérite que dans le résultat collectif, même si des individus doivent être laissés pour compte au terme de l'exercice.

Cette conception de la société n'a pas encore pris racine chez nous - même si certaines initiatives politiques paraissent parfois la courtiser dangereusement - et cette Cour ne l'honorera pas de son approbation. Chaque individu au Canada, au Québec doit jouir de la plénitude de ses droits, soit-il seul, soit-il membre d'un groupe; et si ce groupe compte 100 membres, le centième a autant

le droit de bénéficier de tous ses privilèges de citoyen que les quatre-vingt-dix-neuf autres. La prétendue restriction d'un droit collectif qui priverait le centième membre du groupe de l'exercice des droits garantis par la Charte constitue, pour ce centième membre, une véritable négation de ses droits. On ne saurait simplement le considérer comme le déchet accidentel d'une opération collective: notre conception de la personne humaine ne peut s'accommoder de cette théorie.

Dès lors, peu importe la nature individuelle ou collective des droits garantis à la minorité par l'article 23: c'est toujours un citoyen individualisé qui souffre de l'application de la clause-Québec et, pour lui, cette clause entraîne la négation totale des droits dont il peut pourtant se réclamer en vertu de la Charte.

On voit ainsi que le Québec ne peut se réfugier derrière l'article 1 de la Charte pour justifier la clause-Québec. La clause-Québec ne constitue pas une restriction, encore moins une restriction "dans des limites raisonnables", des droits garantis à l'article 23 de la Charte. Pour chaque citoyen touché par la clause-Québec, celle-ci constitue la négation des droits que la Charte canadienne lui garantit: la clause-Québec doit donc céder.

### PART III

#### WARRING DEMOGRAPHERS, DEPARTING ANGLOS

It was Jacques Henripin who launched what the Globe and Mail's William Johnson called The Great Demographic Scare <sup>74</sup> in the 1970's. Focusing on language transfers among immigrants, he and other demographers painted scenarios of French-speaking Quebecers becoming a minority in Montreal by the end of the century. As Montreal went, so ultimately would go the province.

It was just the sort of analysis needed by Camille Laurin to support his arguments for restrictive language legislation. Richard Joy noted, however,<sup>75</sup> that the rhythm of anglophone departures from Quebec had been on the upswing for some years. Unilingual francophones as a portion of the total population were on the rise, unilingual anglophones in decline. Joy concluded that a Charter of the French Language was unnecessary. His views were ignored.

A study by Réjean Lachapelle, showing that the proportion of French-mother-tongue Quebecers to other Quebecers had increased between 1971 and 1976, came out only after Bill 101's adoption.<sup>76</sup>

In the Fall of 1980, Lachapelle and Henripin together produced La situation démographique au Canada, "the most complete and authoritative demographic study of languages in Canada". <sup>74</sup>

74. Johnson, William, "Faulty Information Sparked a Decade of Fear", Globe and Mail, October 16, 1980, p. 8.

75. Joy, Richard, "Inutile à la lumière des données récentes de la démographie, la Charte du français hâtera le départ des anglophones", Le Devoir, le 9 juin, 1977, p. 5.

76. Yorston, John, "Monique Bégin Says Decline of Francophones a Myth", Montreal Star, November 22, 1977, p. A14.

The authors show that, between 1956 and 1961, Quebec received 39,200 non-francophones from other provinces, but sent them 45,000 in return. The result was a net loss in non-francophones.

Ten years later, the drainage was much greater. Between 1966 and 1971, Quebec lost 108,800 non-francophones to the rest of Canada, compared to the 47,700 it received. In other words, Quebec exported 2.3 non-francophones for every one it imported. It will be interesting to see, after the 1981 census, whether this net export continued to accelerate in the past 10 years. I'm confident it did.

In fact, the authors offer some figures to show that the flow has increased. From 1971 to 1976, the Montreal region alone exported 47,300 more non-francophones to the rest of Canada than it received.

Why, then, the great demographic scare, the fear of the "minorization" of francophones in Montreal and the rest of Quebec? Jacques Henripin... now says that his earlier studies were conducted without taking into consideration the effects of this regional migration. More recent research has shown that non-francophones are 10 to 15 times more likely to leave Quebec than francophones.

By concentrating too much on birth and death rates and not enough on migration, Henripin's earlier studies came to faulty conclusions. (74)

The 1981 Census confirmed what Joy had pointed to, and Lachapelle and Henripin confirmed: a growing net loss of English-speaking Quebecers from the province. In fact, between 1976 and 1981, the loss more than doubled that of the previous two five-year periods. This resulted not only from a significantly higher outflow, but a sharply reduced intake:

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74. Johnson, William, "Faulty Information Sparked a Decade of Fear", Globe and Mail, October 16, 1980, p.8.

| 5-YEAR PERIOD | ENGLISH MOTHER TONGUE |        | NET LOSS |
|---------------|-----------------------|--------|----------|
|               | OUTFLOW               | INFLOW |          |
| 1966-1971     | 92,315                | 42,935 | 49,380   |
| 1971-1976     | 98,595                | 49,515 | 50,080   |
| 1976-1981     | 131,530               | 25,220 | 106,310  |

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More than a third of the net loss was in the 25-39 age bracket,<sup>78</sup> the most active part of the population, with young families that keep schools open.

Demographic, school enrolment and other data moved sociologist Gary Caldwell, a research fellow at the Institut national de recherche sur la culture, to warn that "the risk of oblivion" for English Quebec was not negligible.<sup>79</sup>

At first, Cultural Communities Minister Gérald Godin reacted to this drain by arguing that the anglophone percentage of the total number of Quebecers who left the province was the same in 1976-81 as it had been in 1971-76 - 65% of total departures for each five-year period.<sup>80</sup> If that is so, it simply points out that, since many more English-speaking Quebecers left in 1976-81, than in 1971-76, many more francophones must have left, too! How far we had come from René Lévesque's promises back in 1977 to stem "the tragic hemorrhage" of francophones, especially of young people!<sup>81</sup>

77. Statistics Canada, 1981 Census.

78. Blackman, Fred, "Table 9 Tells Exodus Story", Gazette, August 13, 1983, p.A3

79. "Anglo-Quebec on the Verge of Its History", Language and Society, Sept. 1982.

80. "Les Anglophones quittaient le Québec aussi massivement de 1971 à 1976, soutient Godin", Le Devoir, le 27 avril 1983, p. 8.

81. "Youth Exodus Concerns Quebec", Winnipeg Free Press, May 24, 1977.

## PART IV - ECONOMIC IMPACT

### OMELETTE, OR JUST SCRAMBLED EGGS?

Camille Laurin's main goal in bringing forth the Charter of the French Language was the francization of Big Business in Quebec.<sup>82</sup> He felt that the francization provisions of Bill 22 put economic factors ahead of linguistic ones:

What comes first is the need and the willingness for the francophone majority to have the (management) posts to which they have a right.(83)

He was warned of the heavy potential cost of meeting his goal by SECOR management consultants Roger Miller and Yvan Allaire, francization advisors to the former Liberal government and its Régie de la langue française. Trying to francize as thoroughly and quickly as he proposed, risked the loss of thousands of jobs, especially in firms the majority of whose clientèle or operations were located outside Quebec.<sup>84</sup> They did not sway Dr. Laurin from his conviction that "companies are here in Quebec because ... there is a market ... The reasons to stay are stronger than the reasons to leave."<sup>83</sup> Unfortunately for all Quebecers, and especially for the francophone Quebecers whose interests Laurin was trying to promote, it has not worked out that way.

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82. Aubin, op.cit.

83. Wildgust, John, "French Right to Top Jobs, P.Q. Priority, Says Laurin", Montreal Star, December 12, 1976, pp. 1, 2.

84. Johnson, William, "Language Job Would Cost Quebec 22,900 Jobs, Study Finds", Globe and Mail, June 13, 1977, p. 1.

Early in 1980, Allaire and Miller published a report showing that the language law had caused large firms to shift 6,300 head office and technical jobs out of Montreal.<sup>85</sup> At the end of March, 1982, the Conseil du Patronat, Quebec's largest employers' association, released a study showing that 28 head offices had left Quebec since 1978, in part because of the language law.<sup>86</sup> The following September, Claude Aubin, President of the Office de la langue française, tried to put the head office drain into context: he claimed that as many head offices had left Toronto in the previous five years as had departed from Montreal. Liberal MNA Clifford Lincoln reacted with incredulity:

What Mr. Aubin is saying is that some 72 head offices have left Toronto in the last five years, for this is the corresponding number of those that have left Montreal. And if we add those firms that have transferred their head offices in all but legal terms, and those which have moved whole plants or divisions or major components, the figure is more than 100.

Some statistical counts place the figure at well over 100. Even if the lowest count is used, the cumulative consequences of such a massive exodus constitute a socio-economic disaster of major proportions...

One simply has to study the latest Financial Post survey of Canada's top 500 companies to ascertain that Mr. Aubin's statement is unfounded and ridiculous. Of these 500 top operating companies, a large majority (264) have their head offices in Toronto and Ontario, while 108 are located in Western Canada (Manitoba to British Columbia), and only 94 in Montreal and Quebec.

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85. "Francization Bill Is \$93 Million - Study", Gazette, January 29, 1980, p. 43.

86. "Perte de 28 sièges sociaux importants depuis 1978", La Presse, le 31 mars, 1982, p. F7.

Montreal, once the head-office city par excellence, is the headquarters for only 84 of those top operating companies. Even that number includes several that have shifted headquarters for all intents and purposes - except for the face-saving brass plate and legalities.(87)

In April, 1983, Liberal MNA Reed Scowen claimed that the exodus of jobs from Quebec, and the provincial government's inability to attract new ones, cost Quebec \$1 billion in lost revenue in 1982 alone.<sup>88</sup> Between 1976 and 1982, the number of jobs in Canada increased 2.27 per cent, but only 0.56 per cent in Quebec. Scowen said one of the reasons for this lag in job retention/creation was Bill 101.<sup>88</sup> A Toronto Star report in July, 1983, cited the language law as one of the factors that had caused 629 companies of all sizes to move their headquarters out of Quebec since 1979. During the same period, 238 firms (sic) moved into Quebec; for a net loss of 391.<sup>89</sup>

To be sure, the Charter of the French Language was only one of the reasons for the job drain out of Quebec. Some of the others are avoidance of Quebec's high personal and property taxes, better business prospects elsewhere, and greater proximity to clients and markets.

In February, 1978, Premier René Lévesque was quoted as saying: "I think the departure of businesses is a positive trend. You have to break some eggs to make an omelette."(90)

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87. Lincoln, Clifford, "Head Offices Leaving and Bill 101 is a Major Cause", Gazette, October 18, 1982, p. B3.

88. Mann, Jonathan, "Job Exodus Cost Quebec \$1 billion in 1982: Liberal", Gazette, April 23, 1983, p. A6

89. Picton, John, "Firms Fleeing Quebec 'Spies'", Toronto Star, July 24, 1983, pp. A1, 8.

The following year, Economic Development Minister Bernard Landry was quoted as saying: "We are not sorry our masters are leaving." (90)

And recently, on Radio-Québec's "Droit de Parole" programme, Gérald Godin said that to argue that Bill 101 is to blame for businesses leaving is to say that French is the language of unemployment.

The part of the Charter that causes companies the greatest difficulty is the section that restricts access to English schools. It is not, as the Parti québécois tends to believe, because the managers and highly skilled technicians whom companies are trying to retain or attract here do not want to send their children to French schools; they merely want the choice of schools. In fact, it is this same class of people who have pressed school boards across Canada to set up French immersion classes for their children. In 1982-83, there were an estimated 68,000<sup>91</sup> children registered in French immersion courses: 18,000 in Quebec and 50,000 in the other nine provinces, not to mention the 12,000<sup>92</sup> voluntarily enrolled in French schools in Quebec. Clearly, French language schooling now sells itself, but the Quebec government still prefers compulsion to persuasion. It stands firm in its opposition to Canadians from other provinces gaining access to English schools here, at least via the Canadian Constitution.

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90. Picton, John, "Firms Fleeing Quebec 'Spies'", Toronto Star, July 24, 1983, pp. A1, 8.

91. Estimates from the Annual Report of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 1982, p. 172.

92. Proulx, Jean-Pierre, op.cit., le 28 septembre, 1983.

As for the rules allowing people working for short stints in head office or research functions to send their children to English schools, the government has sent mixed messages over the years. Towards the end of the 1979-80 school year, it began to tighten access to permits and renewals, especially for those with landed immigrant status.<sup>93</sup> The restrictions were eased somewhat in November 1981,<sup>94</sup> and appear to have been completely relaxed for foreigners coming to Quebec to work at the recently announced Bell Helicopter plant near Mirabel.

Although companies rarely complain publicly about it, and none has gone to the Francization Appeals Commission, francization of the private sector has not been as smooth as Dr. Laurin would have us believe: "Elle s'est accomplie beaucoup plus rapidement et facilement que ce dont on m'avait prévenu".<sup>95</sup>

The first president of the Office de la langue française, Raymond Gosselin, declared in mid-1978:

I've talked with a lot of company presidents and they understand, Gosselin said in an interview with The Gazette. I've told them when you're dealing outside Quebec you can deal in whatever language you want. That's your business.

But when you're dealing in Quebec you must deal, or have the capacity to deal, with Quebecers in French.(96)

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- 93. Stewart, James A., "Bill 101's 'Temporary' Loophole Tightens", Gazette, June 28, 1980.
  - 94. Shepherd, Harvey, "Easing of Bill 101 Not Enough, Says Montreal Economic Chief", Gazette, November 27, 1981, p. 3.
  - 95. Aubin, op.cit.
  - 96. Anderson, Ian, "Head Offices: What the OLF Seeks", Gazette, July 29, 1978.

Yet in May 1981, 6,000 Quebec firms of 50 employees or more received a letter from the Office ordering that all their business correspondence be in French, even in dealing with English-speaking firms outside the province.<sup>97</sup> In April, 1983, Gérald Godin, by now Minister responsible for most of Bill 101, said the government was going to study whether to extend the francization regulations to companies of 15 to 49 employees: "It's a very remote possibility because there are still four or five steps to be taken, but still, I mean, the train is on the tracks."<sup>98</sup>

For the P.Q., only the coercion of legislation could lead Quebec down the right set of francization rails. They ignored studies available in 1977<sup>99</sup> which indicated that the French-English wage gap in the province was steadily shrinking. Writing for the OLF two years later, Paul Bernard and Jean Renaud showed the income gap between francophones and anglophones closing significantly between 1971 and 1978. Should anything slow down the population and economic growth that had made the recent advances of francophones possible, the two sociologists suggested the following:

From a catching-up model based on the privileged allocation of new jobs to francophones, we would go to a model of appropriation or reappropriation of jobs, with francophones expelling non-francophones into the job categories that are less prestigious and offer fewer possibilities for control.

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- 97. "Correspond in French Only, Quebec Firms Told", Globe and Mail, May 27, 1981.
  - 98. Mann, Jonathan, "Quebec to Study Bill 101 Extension to Thousands of Small Firms: Godin", Gazette, April 29, 1983, p. A5.
  - 99. "Quebec Anglos Win Pay Race", Winnipeg Free Press, May 2, 1977, p. 10;  
"A Narrowing Wage Gap Is Ignored", Globe and Mail, edit., July 18, 1977, p. 6.

Professors Bernard and Renaud realize that non-francophones might take exception to having their jobs "appropriated". They continue: The risk of this model is political; it will necessarily generate social tensions within the community on non-francophones whose members would lose all hope of improving or even maintaining their position."<sup>(100)</sup>

In 1981, the Conseil de la langue française published a study<sup>101</sup> by Robert Lacroix and François Vaillancourt which showed that the gap had closed except at the highest management levels. Since the last year covered by their study was 1978, it seems fair to presume that there is now no more gap.

At the same time, there has been a general increase in the use of French between 1971 and 1979, except amongst francophone executives, it has actually declined somewhat.<sup>102</sup> Could the latter phenomenon perhaps be due to the fact that francophones generally hold more senior positions now than they did twelve years ago, and hence find themselves dealing much more with the rest of North America than was the case a decade or so ago?

Certainly, Raymond Gosselin was pleased to announce as he left the presidency of the Office de la langue française in February, 1982, that there were 500,000 more French Quebecers working totally in French in 1981 than in the previous year.<sup>103</sup> And there is evidence that francization

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100. Johnson, William, "P.Q. Study Hints at 'Appropriation' of Better Jobs by Francophones", Vancouver Sun, August 30, 1979, p. A8.

101. Lacroix, Robert; Vaillancourt, François, "Le revenu et la langue au Québec (1970-1978)", Conseil de la langue française, 1981.

102. Monnier, Daniel, "L'Usage du français au travail", Conseil de la langue française, 1983.

103. Perley, Warren, "Laurin Envisages 'Fine Tuning' of French Language Law", Gazette, February 6, 1982.

leads to increased productivity by francophones, especially in management positions. That was one conclusion of a study done of 27 firms of 500 employees or more and six public sector employers in 1979-80 by François Vaillancourt and Richard L'Heureux for the OLF. They argued that even a slight increase in productivity by French-speaking workers would more than pay the bill for francization, which they evaluated at 0.5 per cent of a company's Quebec sales.<sup>104</sup>

That francization produces significant benefits was known to the many companies which had begun francizing long before the advent of language laws in Quebec. Indeed, the government could have taken the advice of its own commission of inquiry into multinational operations, and used incentives instead of coercion vis-à-vis head office operations.<sup>105</sup>

However, it was not prepared to give companies needing to francize the kind of time it had taken Alcan and many other firms to go through the process voluntarily. Instead, they forced rapid francization, which in many instances became francophonization: that is, hiring French Canadians to give a French face to the company. The speed of the change often disrupted company operations. Many English-speaking people lost their jobs to Francophones hired first for their frenchness and second for their competence.

This "hothouse" approach has led some leading French Canadian businessmen to very negative assessments of its net effect. At the Congrès Langue et

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104. Cloutier, Laurier, "La francisation de l'entreprise: payante", La Presse, le 28 août, 1980. p. B1

105. "En Europe, les choix linguistiques des sièges sociaux sont pragmatiques mais respectent la langue du milieu d'accueil", Le Devoir, le 29 juin 1977, p. 5.

Société in Quebec City last November, André Boutin, President of the Centre de Linguistique de l'Entreprise (which has helped many Quebec firms to francize) confirmed what Miller and Allaire had warned of back in 1977:

Pour permettre à la langue française de prendre la place normale qui lui revient chez nous, c'est-à-dire la place prépondérante, les entreprises à vocation nationale et internationale se sont restructurées au cours des sept ou huit dernières années. Dans bien des cas, leurs opérations québécoises ont été régionalisées et se font désormais en français. Quant aux autres centres de décision, ils ont été installés, très souvent, dans un environnement plus propice à l'usage de la langue anglaise. Le fait que plusieurs centres de décision ne sont plus situés au Québec aura un effet certain sur la carrière des jeunes administrateurs francophones qui sont maintenant prêts à prendre la relève. De plus en plus, ces derniers se verront confinés à un rôle régional. (106)

In 1977, Camille Laurin knew that business in Quebec was francizing; knew that the French-English income gap was closing. For him, it was proceeding too slowly, and would not produce a business environment consonant with a unilingual French-speaking Quebec. Quebecers have paid a heavy price for his haste; many of our most ambitious and talented people, French and English, now have to go to Toronto and points West to reach the top.

This situation had become serious enough by March 1983, to move Montreal City Council to vote unanimously that the Quebec government be pressed to amend the parts of Bill 101 which were encouraging the exodus of people and businesses from Quebec, making it more difficult to attract new businesses to the city, and preventing the city from providing services and information to its residents in the language of the resident.

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106. Lachance, Lise, "La francisation serait nuisible à l'économie", Le Soleil, le 12 novembre 1982, p. A12.

## PART V

### IMPACT ON ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE AND INSTITUTIONS

#### A POLICY OF EXCLUSION

"I tell you vigorously and solemnly no one will be fired because he speaks only English. If it becomes necessary to put this into writing, somehow we will do it."<sup>107</sup> Camille Laurin made this commitment in mid-April, 1977. Yet, before the month was out, his colleague, Lucien Lessard, sent out an order that drew sharp criticism from the Quebec Human Rights Commission :

Toutes les personnes engagées comme occasionnelles par le Ministère des Transports devront pouvoir communiquer dans la langue de la majorité, c'est-à-dire le français. Ceci ne veut pas dire que les emplois ne devront être donnés qu'à des personnes de langue maternelle française.(108)

In September, four court secretaries hired to translate English-language court testimony, were fired because they could not pass a civil service French test.<sup>109</sup> Their fate presaged what was to befall dozens of professionals, especially nurses and nursing assistants, over the next few years.

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107. Phillips, Andrew, "French Lack Won't Cost Jobs", Gazette, April 18, 1977, p. 1.

108. "La directive serait trop catégorique", Le Devoir, 1e 12 mai 1977.

109. Cléroux, Richard, "Montreal Courthouse to Drop Four Who Transcribe Trials in English", Globe and Mail, September 9, 1977, p. 8.

Article 35 of Bill 101 ostensibly ensures that professionals have a sufficient knowledge of French appropriate to the practice of their particular profession to enable them to serve the Quebec public properly. Yet the regulations under this section grant an attestation of such linguistic competence to anyone who has done at least three years of secondary and/or post-secondary schooling in a French institution. Thus, the francophone (or anglophone) engineer who went to a French high school, English CEGEP and university, is assumed to know the French terminology of engineering. The English-speaking (or French-speaking) engineer who took all his schooling in English institutions has to pass a language test. That is why former MNA Oswald Parent had to take the French test for professionals in order to practise as a chartered accountant in Quebec.<sup>110</sup> It was five years before the tests were properly validated (that is, tested on equivalent groups of francophones) to see if they examined what they were supposed to. The results? The validity, and hence the legality of the tests, was seriously questioned.<sup>111</sup>

The problem is that the tests are not set up to verify whether professionals can communicate with their clients; they are academic-style literary examinations. This explains why so many Registered Nurses and Nursing Assistants, even fluently bilingual ones like Joanne Curran, have failed the tests over the years. The professionals who have consistently done well - doctors, lawyers, accountants - cannot necessarily communicate any better than the nurses; they are just more experienced at doing tests of all kinds, because they have been in school longer than the nurses.

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110. "Ex-MNA Must Prove He Knows His French", Gazette, June 2, 1981.

111. "Au MEQ: des études mettent en doute la légalité des tests", La Presse, le 14 avril 1982.

It is not evident whether officials in the government and the Office even realize this contradiction between ensuring that the French public is well served in its language, and the manner in which the ability to provide this service is actually being checked by the Office. What is clear is that they are stuck on their academic tests. There have been repeated promises over the years to revise them to take into account the different needs of the 39 professions. All that has been done is the preparation of three different levels of examination: for professionals graduating from high school, CEGEP, and university. And this was only done in March, 1983,<sup>112</sup> a year after the leaking of a Conseil de la langue française study highly critical of the tests.<sup>113</sup>

In the fall of 1980, the Shawville Hospital, centred in an overwhelmingly English-speaking part of the Ottawa Valley, was grappling with a serious staff shortage caused by the failure of several of its nurses to pass the OLF test. Aware that the hospital was having trouble recruiting nurses of any language background, the OLF offered to extend beyond the normal maximum of three years the Temporary Permits of the nurses who had failed. The Order of Nurses balked at this illegality,<sup>114</sup> and the Premier, agreeing it was illegal, said it would be preferable to change the law.<sup>115</sup> The law stands unchanged.

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112. "Nouveaux examens de l'Office de la langue française", La Presse, le 31 mars, 1983, p. A14.

113. "Report on French Tests Requires Much Study, says Laurin", Gazette, April 8, 1982, p. A5.

114. Perley, Warren, "Language Crisis Threatens Rural Anglophone Hospitals", Gazette, October 25, 1980, p. 35.

115. Bernier, Gilles, "Les problèmes devraient être réglés avant Noël", Le Droit, le 3 décembre, 1980.

At the end of 1980, Quebec-trained professionals ceased to have the right to practice for up to three years on a Temporary Permit while trying to pass the French test. Dr. Laurin refused to extend this provision of the law despite a petition signed by more than 8,000 students from across the province and the support of the largely francophone student federations, l'Association nationale des étudiants du Québec (CEGEPs) and the Rassemblement des associations étudiantes universitaires.

Laurin argued that the English-language professional programmes had had plenty of lead time to start turning out bilingual graduates. Indeed, in April, 1982, he promised that the French tests would be abolished "when it is certain that graduates of anglophone institutions have adequate knowledge of French and all francophones in the province are assured of receiving services in their own language."<sup>116</sup> As Minister of Education, he promised a revised second language curriculum, teaching materials and pedagogical guides, as well as more teaching time.<sup>117</sup> Yet the government had already cut off French welcoming classes to children eligible for English schooling,<sup>118</sup> putting them at a disadvantage compared to immigrant and French-mother-tongue children as regards learning the language of the majority. And when Dr. Laurin's new Régime pédagogique finally came out, it cut back the time for teaching French as a second language in English high schools by 20 per cent! With help like this, will the English schools

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116. "Language Tests Here for a Few Years: Laurin", Gazette, April 16, 1982, p. A4.

117. Morissette, Rodolphe, "L'OLF prend 3 mesures pour 'faciliter' les tests", Le Devoir, 1e 16 avril, 1982.

118. Des Rivières, Paule, "Enfants de 4 ans et anglophones ne seront admis en classe d'accueil", Le Devoir, 1e 21 février, 1981, pp. 1, 6.

be able to meet Gérald Godin's hope that they can take responsibility for the French tests by the end of the 1983-84 school year?<sup>119</sup>

Well, even if the government and our schools get their language teaching act together that soon, they will have solved only one-half of the problem. One has to acquire a second language, too - by practice. Doing that, especially gaining access to a francophone work milieu, is very difficult indeed. While at least a quarter of the medical staff at the Montreal General, Royal Victoria and Montreal Children's Hospitals is French Canadian (none of whom ever had to pass an English test!), the number of English-speaking doctors and nurses at Notre Dame, St. Luc and Ste. Justine is infinitesimal. Only one OLF official ever went beyond advising those who had failed the French test to go take yet another French course. Jacques Dupuis actually set up a system for non-francophone nurses to work, free of charge, at a small French hospital in the Montreal area in order to practice their French in French surroundings. Do government officials just not understand the process of learning a second language and integrating into its culture? Or is their indifference calculated, part of the same policy that, under Chapter IV of the Charter, will start to francize the character of the English community's hospitals, school boards and social services, starting on January 1, 1984 - all in order to ensure that a francophone can work in French only, anywhere in the province?

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119. Harris, Lewis, "Language Test Reforms on Way, Godin Tells MIAs", Gazette, December 15, 1980, p. A4.

In mid-November 1982, G rald Godin said 'on a televised public affairs program that English hospitals did not always treat francophone patients in French despite the fact that vast sums of Quebecers' tax money went to subsidize anglophone institutions - as though English-speaking Quebecers paid no taxes.<sup>120</sup>

Not long afterward, SORECOM began a survey for the Conseil de la langue fran aise of how francophone patients in English hospitals were being treated in French. Despite its dubious methodology,<sup>121</sup> the study found that service in French was good.<sup>122</sup> Yet, as of next January 1, the institutions' provision of this service will not be enough. The internal administration of each hospital, school board and social service centre will be francized and everyone trying to get a job, a transfer or promotion in a English institution will have to pass a French test based on the same dubious approach as the tests for professionals.

Meanwhile, the Minister of Cultural Communities assured English-speaking Quebecers that they have the right to receive treatment in English in French hospitals.<sup>123</sup> He even said that he was prepared to act on complaints by English-speaking people if they could not get such services. However, he will have no legal backing for any action he might wish to take, because there is no law requiring French hospitals to provide such service.<sup>124</sup>

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120. Chambers, Gretta, "Deaf to the Protests", Gazette, November 27, 1982, p. B3.

121. Scott, Sarah, "Godin Scorns Language Survey Protest.", Gazette, January 21, 1983, p. A3.

122. Proulx, Jean-Pierre, "Les francophones se trouveraient bien servis dans les h pitaux anglophones", Le Devoir, le 20 mai 1983, p. 2.

123. Fraser, Graham, "Anglo Patients Have a Right to Service in English: Godin", Gazette, March 9, 1983, pp. A1, 2.

124. Fraser, Graham; Whittaker, Stephanie, "Patients Have 'No Law' Ensuring English", Gazette, March 10, 1983, pp. A1, 2.

As for government services in English, the 1981 SORECOM poll<sup>125</sup> indicates that the French majority supports the principle; yet English Quebecers cannot even get an English copy of their new Human Rights Charter in English!

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125. Morissette, Rodolphe, op cit., Le Devoir, 1e 19 septembre 1981.

PART VI - CIVIL SERVICE:

ONLY MOHICANS NEED APPLY

When the Parti québécois came to power, about three per cent of Quebec's civil servants spoke English as their mother tongue. "Camille Laurin admitted that the public service commission had not encouraged anglophones to apply and that 'subtle discrimination' may be used against those who do."<sup>126</sup> In April, 1978, Public Service Minister Denis de Belleval promised to bend rigid hiring rules to attract more anglos into the provincial civil service.<sup>127</sup> In October, 1981, Cultural Communities Minister Gérald Godin appointed a Committee to implement the Action Plan for Minorities, part of whose mandate was to increase the representation of those minorities in the civil service and on government boards and agencies. By the time of the 1981 Census, English-speaking civil servants had fallen to 2.3 per cent of the total.<sup>128</sup> By the end of 1982, that figure had tumbled to 0.6 per cent."<sup>129</sup>

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126. Arnopoulos, Sheila, "Laurin: 'Too Few English Officials'", Montreal Star, February 14, 1977, p. 1.

127. Radmanovich, Alex, "Civil Service 'Open' to Anglophones", Montreal Star, April 13, 1978.

128. Mémoire d'Alliance Québec sur l'Avant-projet de loi sur la Fonction publique, le 16 septembre, 1983

129. Mann, Jonathan, "English-speaking Quebecers under One Per Cent of Civil Service: Study", Gazette, May 31, 1983.

## PART VII - PLACE NAMES AND SIGNS

### PLAYING WITH MIRRORS

Cultural Development Minister Camille Laurin says we need not fear wholesale replacement of English names by French ones. The francization programme will apply mainly to new places and when other changes are being considered, the Toponymy Commission will be guided by tradition, history and the wishes of the local population. (130)

English names won't disappear from the map of Quebec when the committee, set up under Bill 101 to oversee the province's place names, goes to work.

Henri Dorion, the ... head of the Commission de la toponymie du Québec, said yesterday that its purpose is not to replace English names with French ones.

We are not a commission for the francization of place-names ... There's no question of systematically translating into French the thousands of place-names in Quebec that have English, Inuit or Indian origins. We will respect names that have been established by long use.

It's really a question of striking a reasonable balance between the plurality of Quebec's cultural heritage and the aspirations of Quebecers to live in French.

But even if the English proper names of streets, towns or lakes aren't changed, he said, only the French version of the complete name will be official.

For example, we'll have to start talking about rue Sherbrooke and not Sherbrooke Street. (131)

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- 130. Jim Stewart's Montreal, "Name Game Just Beginning", Montreal Star, April 11, 1977, p. A5.
  - 131. "Anglo Map Names Won't Be Scrapped, Commissioner Says", Gazette, August 18, 1978.

This approach has produced some bizarre results in places like the Eastern Townships: the Scottish expression "Ben Durban" has become "Mont d'Urban". "Little England" is now "Petite-Angleterre". "Sally's Pond" is called "Etang Sallys". "Hog's Back Mountain" has 'grown' in size; "Mont Eléphant" is now its name.<sup>132</sup> Determined to halt this unsystematic, but far-reaching process of francizing historic English place names, the Townshippers' Association presented a policy paper to the Commission de la toponymie on October 1, 1982. The report laid out a well-documented argument for designating place names in a way that would respect their many linguistic origins. The Townshippers called on the Commission to adopt a policy recognizing French and non-French names, and providing for equitable and consistent treatment of all place names. The correct forms of English place names should be reinstated, and a formal procedure established to ensure the protection of all place names of historical or cultural significance. Clear and equitable consultation procedures for name changes should be laid down, with an appeal mechanism, and the English-speaking and native communities should be represented on the Commission.<sup>132</sup> Six months later, Gérald Godin declared that predominantly English communities and institutions could keep their traditional names alongside the French equivalent.<sup>133</sup>

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132. Klinck, Gail F., The Toponymy of Quebec, Townshippers' Association, October 1, 1982.

133. Curran, Peggy, op.cit., Gazette, March 11, 1983.

He ordered a halt to the Commission's francization of English place names, and he killed a Commission directive to all municipalities ordering them to francize street names: Maple Street would have become rue Maple, for example. Action on the other recommendations of the Townshippers' Report awaits the outcome of the Parliamentary hearings on language.

Not only place names but signs of all kinds have been changing. Public signs must be in French, but versions are permitted in other languages in cases of public health or safety: "matières dangereuses interdites dans ce tunnel", for example. Signs on commercial establishments must be in French; if the store sells a cultural product, or has fewer than five employees, it can post signs in other languages. Camille Laurin explained these restrictions back in 1977:

En ce moment l'affichage ne traduit pas notre identité. Le caractère unilingue du Québec doit se traduire à ce niveau. Il y a eu des progrès depuis cinq ou six ans, mais ils sont minimes. L'affichage est important pour l'identité collective. Il est comme un miroir. Si chaque matin le miroir vous renvoyait une image de vous qui ne correspond pas à ce que vous êtes, vous subiriez des effets de sidération et d'aliénation. Pour nous, l'affiche joue le rôle du miroir. Si l'affiche renvoie à une population française une image anglaise, c'est dangereux.(134)

We reflect, therefore we exist? Only if we're French. It takes us back to the opening statement of Bill 1:

L'Assemblée nationale constate que la langue française est, depuis toujours, la langue du peuple québécois et que c'est elle qui lui permet d'exprimer son identité.

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134. Dumas, Evelyn, op.cit., p. 9.

This phrasing raised a storm of protest. "Who is a Quebecer?" asked the Quebec Human Rights Commission in a highly critical assessment of the draft legislation.<sup>135</sup> By the time the Charter of the French Language became law on August 26, 1977, the opening text had been changed to read:

Langue distinctive d'un peuple majoritairement franco-phone, la langue française permet au peuple québécois d'exprimer son identité.

By implication, that leaves room for non-francophones to be Quebecers, too. In practice, as we have seen, it is another story.

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135. "La conception du Québec qui sous-tend le projet no 1 ne saurait servir de fondement à la construction d'une société harmonieuse", Le Devoir, le 17 juin, 1977, p. 5.